



PRESS RELEASE – 15 May 2026, Paris

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**Sanctions against Francesca Albanese: JURDI welcomes the decision of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia and calls for the revocation of the sanctions.**

The Association of Jurists for the Respect of International Law (JURDI) welcomes the decision issued on 13 May 2026 by Judge Richard J. Leon of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, granting a preliminary injunction against the sanctions imposed by the Trump administration on Ms. Francesca Albanese, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967. JURDI calls upon the President of the United States to immediately revoke Executive Order 14203, “Imposing Sanctions on the International Criminal Court”.

Imposed in July 2025 in response to Ms. Albanese’s documentation and advocacy work, these sanctions have resulted in the freezing of her assets in the United States, a ban on her entry into U.S. territory, the severance of her professional ties with U.S. persons, and her complete exclusion from banking services, including those based in Europe.

The sanctions form part of a broader policy of pressure and retaliation directed against all those who document and legally characterise the crimes committed by United States nationals and their allies – including Israel. Eleven judges of the International Criminal Court are currently subject to sanctions, including the French judge Nicolas Guillou, as well as four Palestinian human rights organisations.

The infringement of Ms. Albanese’s rights is particularly grave given that she holds a mandate as an independent expert of the United Nations and, on that basis, enjoys functional immunity covering all words spoken or written in the performance of her duties, pursuant to the 1946 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations – to which the United States has been a party since 1970, and whose scope has been confirmed on two separate occasions by the International Court of Justice.

The U.S. court holds that the sanctions penalise the expression of a legal opinion formulated by Ms. Albanese in the exercise of the mandate entrusted to her by the Human Rights Council, and that they thereby contravene the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, which guarantees the freedom of speech.

This decision vindicates the position that JURDI has consistently defended: no State may, without undermining the fundamental principles of the rule of law, hinder the exercise of an international mandate or silence those who recall the requirements of international law in respect of the crimes committed by Israel in occupied Palestine. It is in this spirit that JURDI addressed, on 18 February 2026, an open letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations seeking the protection of Ms. Albanese, and that it filed a complaint, on 4 March 2026, against the French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs before the Court of Justice of the Republic, in connection with statements falsely attributed to the Special Rapporteur.

JURDI remains committed to supporting all those who work to document, legally characterise and bring to justice the most serious violations of international law committed in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and to upholding their independence.

JURDI calls for:



- The immediate revocation of Executive Order 14203 by the President of the United States;
- The adoption by the European Commission of all measures necessary for the effective implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 2271/96, as amended by Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2018/1100, with a view to preventing the recognition and enforcement within the Union of the extraterritorial effects of the U.S. sanctions;
- The adoption of measures aimed at preventing the over-compliance of European service providers with foreign extraterritorial sanctions, in particular by way of structured dialogue with such providers and through clear guidance recalling the absence of any direct legal effect of those sanctions within the legal order of the European Union;
- The referral by the United Nations General Assembly to the International Court of Justice of a request for an advisory opinion on the compatibility with international law of extraterritorial sanctions targeting international justice actors and human rights organisations;
- The establishment of financial support mechanisms designed to mitigate the economic consequences suffered by the Palestinian non-governmental organisations affected by the U.S. sanctions;
- Public opposition to any attempt to influence the prosecutorial policy of the ICC and the independence of the Court;
- The strengthening by France of its cooperation with the International Criminal Court and the full observance of its obligations under the Rome Statute, in particular the obligation to execute arrest warrants issued by the Court against any person within its jurisdiction or control.

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